

Weekly COVID-19 Update – August 27, 2021: Seven-Day Average For Positive Cases Surpasses 350

The Delaware Division of Public Health (DPH) is providing an update on the most recent statistics related to coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) in Delaware, as of 6 p.m. Thursday, August 26, 2021.

A total of 118,544 positive cases of COVID-19 among Delaware residents have been reported to DPH since March 11, 2020. The seven-day average of new positive cases increased to 354.1 as of Thursday, August 26, 2021.

As of Tuesday, August 24, the seven-day average for the percentage of total tests that were positive was 7.5%, a decrease from 7.8% as of Tuesday, August 17. There is a two-day lag for presenting data related to percent of tests that are positive to account for the time delay between the date of the test and the date that DPH receives the test result.

In addition, 210 individuals are currently hospitalized due to COVID-19 in Delaware, an increase of 45 from last week. Thirty-four of the hospitalized persons are critically ill, an increase of five from last week.

A total of 1,875 Delawareans have passed away due to

complications from COVID-19. Twenty-four deaths were reported in the past week, nine of which were from a review of vital statistics. The total number of individuals who have died from COVID-19 range in age from younger than 5 to 104 years old. Of those who have died, 951 were female and 924 were male. A total of 931 individuals were from New Castle County, 388 were from Kent County, and 556 were from Sussex County.

FDA Approves Pfizer-BioNTech Vaccine for Individuals 16 and Older:

On Monday, August 23, 2021, the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) announced that it has approved the COVID-19 Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine biologics license application (BLA) for individuals 16+. It is the first of the three available COVID-19 vaccines to receive official approval from the FDA. Previously, the vaccine was being distributed only under an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA). The Pfizer vaccine has since been subject to an exhaustive independent review by FDA scientists – including an additional eight months of safety data and follow up with vaccine recipients, leading the FDA to grant approval. With full approval for a COVID-19 vaccine, the public can be even more confident that the COVID-19 vaccines work and are safe.

The vaccine also continues to be available under emergency use authorization (EUA), including for individuals 12 through 15 years of age and for the administration of a third dose in certain immunocompromised individuals. While there is not yet enough data to include 12-to-15-year-olds or the immunocompromised who want a third dose under the full approval, this does not mean the vaccine is not safe for these individuals. They are still eligible to receive the Pfizer vaccine under the existing Emergency Use Authorization, which

remains in effect.

The FDA approval of the Pfizer vaccine includes a name change for the vaccine to COMIRNATY. It is the same vaccine and the same dosage; only the name has changed.

COVID-19 Vaccinations:

According to data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 75.6% of Delawareans ages 18+ have received at least one dose of the vaccine. As of 12:01 a.m. August 27, 2021, a total of 1,109,421 administered doses of the COVID-19 vaccine have been reported to the state's immunization information system, DelVAX. Among Delawareans 12+, 554,201 have received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, and 492,758 Delawareans are fully vaccinated. Delaware's latest COVID-19 vaccination statistics can be found under the Vaccine Tracker dashboard at de.gov/healthycommunity.

Vaccines are the best protection we have against COVID-19 and circulating variants. For the latest information on the COVID-19 vaccine and the vaccination rollout in Delaware, visit de.gov/covidvaccine.

COVID-19 Case Vaccination Status Report:

The following report captures a weekly breakdown of vaccination status for cases, deaths, and hospitalizations for the time frame for August 16 – August 22. The report highlights the significant percentage of cases and hospitalized individuals in Delaware who are unvaccinated, or

only partially vaccinated. Vaccination continues to be the most important factor in reducing deaths and hospitalizations from COVID-19.

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Weekly Overview (8/16 -8/22)	
Unvaccinated Cases	
Total Unvaccinated / Partially Vaccinated Cases	1783
Total Cases	2309
Percent of Unvaccinated / Partially Vaccinated Cases	77%
Hospitalizations	
Unvaccinated / Partially Vaccinated Hospitalized Cases	94
Total Hospitalized Cases	128
Percent of Unvaccinated / Partially Vaccinated Hospitalized Cases	73%
Deaths	
Unvaccinated / Partially Vaccinated COVID-19 Deaths	8
Total COVID-19 Deaths	13

Percent of Unvaccinated / Partially Vaccinated COVID-19 Deaths	62%
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Breakthrough Cases:

To date, 492,758 Delawareans have been fully vaccinated. Of those, there have been 1,544 breakthrough cases of COVID-19, occurring in approximately three-tenths of 1 percent of vaccinated individuals. Forty-three of the reported breakthrough cases identified since vaccinations began involved hospitalizations and 21 individuals passed away, although it does not mean COVID-19 was the cause of death. Breakthrough cases continue to be extremely rare given the total number of persons who are fully vaccinated, and the science is clear, the best way to prevent serious illness from COVID-19 is to get vaccinated.

A breakthrough case is defined as testing positive for COVID-19 after an individual has been fully vaccinated for two weeks or more – although it does not mean that the infection actually occurred after vaccination.

Update on COVID-19 Variant Cases in Delaware:

As of Friday, August 27, the Division of Public Health has identified the following COVID-19 variants in Delaware through routine surveillance of test specimens. These variants are based on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) list of Variants of Concern and Variants of Interest. The CDC recently removed Epsilon/B.1.427 and Epsilon/B.1.429 from the Variants of Interest list. As a result, we have removed them from the below chart.

Of the tests samples that were sequenced, 68% percent of the 139 test samples sequenced at the DPH Lab were positive for a variant strain, as were 20 additional specimens sequenced at an outside lab. This brings the total of variant positive samples to 114 for the week. Ninety-seven percent were identified as the Delta variant strain.

Variants of Concern			Variants of Interest		
Variant	Origin	# of Cases	Variant	Origin	# of Cases
Alpha/B.1.1.7	United Kingdom	1007	Eta/B.1.525	UK/Nigeria (formerly NEW York, US)	2
Beta/B.1.351	South Africa	1	Iota/B.1.526	New York, US	272
Gamma/P.1	Brazil	63	Epsilon/B.1.427	California, US	10
Delta/B.1.617.2	India	255	Epsilon/B.1.429	California, US	11

The Delaware Public Health Laboratory has sequenced 3,880 specimens for COVID-19 variant strains to date. In aggregate, the cases include 1,376 adults ranging in age from 18-98, as well as 282 individuals under the age of 18. One thousand two hundred and twenty-seven individuals were from New Castle County, 223 were from Kent County and 208 were from Sussex County.

Virus mutation is common. Sequencing for variants is a complex process and is not used for diagnosing COVID-19. It is used after a positive case of COVID-19 has been identified for

surveillance purposes, or in identifying the presence of a variant strain in the community. When variant strains are identified, public health approaches and treatments do not currently change. Because these variants may spread more easily, it is even more important that unvaccinated individuals who are more susceptible to getting COVID-19 continue taking the necessary steps to avoid spreading the virus – wearing a mask, washing your hands, and being cautious when attending large gatherings.

The science is clear that the vaccines are extremely safe and effective even against variants – and Delawareans who are fully vaccinated have significant protection from COVID-19 infection and serious illness. We would encourage all Delawareans to get vaccinated – de.gov/getmyvaccine.

For more information regarding CDC variant classifications, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-updates/variant-surveillance/variant-info.html>.

DPH COVID Vaccine Mobile Units:

DPH officials in partnership with medical staff from the Delaware National Guard (DNG) have launched mobile units to offer COVID-19 vaccines in underserved communities. Medically trained DNG staff are offering the Pfizer vaccine (for ages 12+) and the Johnson & Johnson vaccine (for persons 18+). These mobile units are visiting communities with low vaccination rates in an effort to eliminate potential barriers to access. The mobile units, which utilize trailers to transport the vaccine and provide vaccinations, are scheduled to visit these communities in New Castle, Kent and Sussex counties next week. COVID-19 testing will be available

at each location.

Monday, August 30

Merchants Square, Wilmington, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Tuesday, August 31

Carroll's Plaza Laundromat, Dover, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Gateway South Shopping Center, Dover, 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Lady Bug Festival, Market Street, Wilmington 5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Wednesday, September 1

Wilmington Farmers Market, Wilmington, 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Adams Four Shopping Center, Wilmington, 3:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Thursday, September 2

Rainbow Pediatrics, Georgetown, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Rainbow Pediatrics, Georgetown, 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Friday, September 3

Edna C. Dickey Park, Newark, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

*dates may be rescheduled if there is inclement weather

For a full list of community-based events statewide including those organized by vaccinating partners and community groups at de.gov/getmyvaccine.

Long-term Care Statistics:

As of 6:00 p.m. Thursday, August 26, there have been a total of 2,848 positive COVID-19 cases involving long-term care residents, and 830 residents of Delaware long-term care facilities have died from complications related to COVID-19.

DPH Encourages Testing After Participating in Large Gatherings and Events:

Given the significant increase in recent COVID-19 cases and the large number of gatherings and events that traditionally take place this month, it is recommended that individuals get tested if they have attended a large public gathering such as a concert, community-based event, or any such event where social distancing was not possible and the vaccination status of others is unknown. You should also get tested if you attended gatherings such as birthday parties, off-to-college parties, or weddings where people were in close contact and you were unable to confirm vaccination status of those around you, especially if the gatherings were indoors. A list of testing locations can be found at de.gov/gettested. Additionally, at-home test options are listed on the site, including take-home COVID-19 test kits available at Delaware Libraries. These rapid antigen test kits produce results in as little as 15 minutes and can be kept at

home if someone develops symptoms. If you have symptoms of COVID-19, do not come to a library for a test kit.

Symptoms and Testing:

It's especially important for unvaccinated persons, to be aware of, and self-monitor for, the symptoms of COVID-19. Even fully vaccinated persons should get tested if they develop symptoms or have been exposed to someone with COVID-19.

If you are sick with any of the following symptoms, stay home: fever, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, muscle aches, fatigue, chills, shaking with chills, loss of smell or taste, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, or headache or congestion or runny nose without a known cause such as allergies. Other symptoms such as abdominal pain or lack of appetite have been identified as potential symptoms related to COVID-19 and may prompt further screening, action or investigation by a primary care provider.

Individuals with general questions about COVID-19 should call Delaware 2-1-1, individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing can text their ZIP code to 898-211, or email delaware211@uwde.org. Hours of operation are:

Monday – Friday: 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Saturday: 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Medically related questions regarding testing, symptoms, and

health-related guidance can be submitted by email at DPHCall@delaware.gov.

Delawareans 18 or older are encouraged to download COVID Alert DE, Delaware's free exposure notification app to help protect your neighbors while ensuring your privacy. Download on the [App Store](#) or [Google Play](#)

Questions related to business re-openings or operations as businesses re-open should go to COVID19FAQ@delaware.gov. Questions regarding unemployment claims should be emailed to: UIClaims@delaware.gov.

DPH will continue to update the public as more information becomes available. For the latest on Delaware's response, go to de.gov/coronavirus.